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SPECIAL ESTIMATE

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ESTIMATE OF SOVIET PROBABLE INTENTIONS TOWARD JAPAN

PROBLEM

To estimate whether the U.S.S.R. will attack Japan before mid-April 1951.

CONCLUSION

1. There are no positive indications that the Soviets intend to attack Japan by mid-April 1951, but they have the capability of doing so and could launch such an attack without any appreciable warning.

DISCUSSION

2. The Soviet Union, directly or indirectly, now controls the mainland of Asia from Siberia to Indo-China, with the exception of southern Korea. The U.S.S.R. also controls the northern portion of the island chain off the eastern shore of Asia, comprised of Sakhalin and the Kuriles.

3. The Soviets have the capability of conducting a major amphibious airborne offensive against Japan; simultaneously assaulting Hokkaido and northern Honshu; or of invading Hokkaido first, to be followed by an invasion of Honshu. This operation can receive adequate air support and relatively strong naval support, primarily by submarines.

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4. Soviet troop concentrations in the Far East have been maintained as follows:

9 line divisions, including the equivalent of one airborne division in the Vladivostok area

4 line divisions in the Port Arthur-Dairen area

3 line divisions in Sakhalin

2 line divisions in the Kurile Islands

1 line division in the Kamchatka and Chukotak peninsulas

There are 16 additional Soviet divisions in other areas of the Far East.

5. Soviet Air Forces in the Far East total an estimated 5,300 aircraft of all types, including sufficient airlift for 9,500 men for a distance of about 400 miles.

6. Soviet Far Eastern Naval forces are divided into two fleets - the 7th Fleet based at Sovetskaya Gavan and the 5th Fleet based at Vladivostok. The total fleets consist of 2 heavy cruisers, 1 light cruiser, 34 destroyer types, 81 submarines and a number of minor craft.

7. The Soviet Far East merchant fleet aggregates a total of over a million gross registered tons, including 235 fighter-type, 21 combination fighter-passenger type, and 79 amphibious craft, all of which are considered suitable for amphibious operations, and capable of lifting 10 combat divisions.

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8. Both the U.S.S.R. and Communist China have clearly expressed their concern over the possible remilitarization of Japan.

a. They have steadily intensified their propaganda campaign against alleged United States plans to remilitarize Japan and to secure bases there by means of a separate peace treaty. At the end of January, Radio Moscow, repeating a Chinese Communist press editorial, made the first specific statement that the Chinese people "cannot tolerate" the remilitarization of Japan, asserted that the peoples of China and the Soviet Union "cannot ignore" it, and warned that if the United States armed Japan "a tense situation would ensue in the Far East." The broadcast in an unusual mention of the Sino-Soviet alliance explicitly stated that "one of the primary objectives" of the treaty "is the prevention of Japanese armed aggression."

b. The Soviet Union has officially served notice that it wants the Allied Council for Japan at its 14 February meeting to discuss the subject of "demilitarization of Japan."

c. The Communist-controlled World Peace Council has announced that it will discuss the remilitarization of Japan and Germany at a meeting in Berlin during 21-24 February.

9. Recent indications of possible Soviet intentions are:

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- d. Reports of the arrival of 12 additional Soviet divisions and 500 unspecified aircraft in Sakhalin have been received, but these reports are of questionable validity.
- e. Reports that 6 divisions composed of former Japanese POW's have been moved to Sakhalin. However, little credence is given to these reports.